



Responsible Business Forum

ul. Szpitalna 5/20, 00-031 Warszawa

Phone: +48 22 627 18 71

biuro@fob.org.pl, www.odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl



Press Release
Warsaw, 20 April 2020

The natural environment and new social challenges – how is responsible business changing? Release of the “Responsible Business in Poland 2019. Good Practices” report

This is the 18th edition of the “Responsible Business in Poland. Good Practices” report, and another one presenting more practices than previously. The number of CSR activities presented in this annual publication of the Responsible Business Forum has increased by around 10 percent, reaching 1700 – a record-breaking number in the history of the report. The report was released on 16 April this year via the website: facebook.com/ForumOdpowiedzialnegoBiznesu.

Download a PDF version of the report >>

<http://odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl/publikacje/raport-2019/>

Once again, the Responsible Business Forum has presented its “Responsible Business in Poland. Good Practices” report, which is the most comprehensive CSR review in Poland, with a record number of responsible business activities featured. **In total, the 2019 report contains 1696 practices reported by 214 companies.** The report has succeeded in achieving the increase of around 10% despite the cap introduced this year that limits the number of new good practices to 10. Long-term practices (those that were reported in one of the previous editions and have continued into 2019) are not subject to the cap.

Environmental practices have turned out to be the most dynamically growing area – an increase of over 35% in relation to the previous report. The 321 examples of activities (previous report: 235 practices) reported by 129 companies (previously: 101) included, among others, activities related to reducing the consumption of plastic, a circular economy, conservation of biodiversity, environmental education, and counteracting the climate crisis.

“2019 can be considered a year of the natural environment, and the latest “Responsible Business in Poland. Good Practices” report proves this. We have recorded a noticeable increase in the number of ‘environmental’ practices despite the cap on the number of new activities that can be reported. Companies opt for environmental solutions because this has become a key topic for a wide range of stakeholders. This is a positive change that we believe companies will continue to drive. Naturally, the first quarter of 2020 has shown that business is facing further, urgent challenges in the social domain. The crises related to the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus pandemic has proven that companies can respond quickly, providing help and support. From March, about 80 examples of activities pursued by



Responsible Business Forum

ul. Szpitalna 5/20, 00-031 Warszawa

Phone: +48 22 627 18 71

biuro@fob.org.pl, www.odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl

[f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [in](#) [v](#) #CSRwPL

*Responsible Business Forum partner companies have been added to the “Business in response to COVID-19” section of the responsiblebusiness.pl website. We are observing a growing number of solidarity and aid actions all around us. It must be ensured that this upsurge is not followed by a collapse. We can already see how multifaceted the ongoing developments are, which means that we can expect new challenges, but those that are already known, such as digital exclusion or combating violence and homelessness, may prove even more pressing. They are closely related to the economic and social situation, the anticipated changes on the labour market, and specific forms of work, such as remote work, which is widely practiced now. Of course, employee-oriented solutions will be crucial in the context of counteracting possible job cuts. Once again, we have also come to face the problem of forms of employment – do we really want and, as a society, can we afford, a paramedic or nurse to work on a self-employment basis? These are the questions that we must jointly seek answers to and that can determine our reality for years. However, environmental issues are equally important – it is essential that they are not marginalised. The greatest test for corporate responsibility of businesses and confirmation that sustainable development is actually in their DNA is yet to come. However, constraint is often – especially in business – an impulse for exceptional creativity and coming up with solutions that respond to social, economic and environmental needs across a range of dimensions. Small organisations or start-ups are not the only example here. We profoundly believe that you will find a reflection of such practices in our next – 2020 report. Before this happens, please read and look for inspiration in the 2019 Report”, says **Marzena Strzelczak, General Director of Responsible Business Forum.***

The 18th “Responsible Business in Poland. Good practices” report includes 1696 good practices (previous edition: 1549), reported by 214 companies (previously: 229). It is worth noting, however, that owing to the cap on new practices that can be reported, their number has dropped from 826 to 712. By contrast, the number of long-term practices has increased significantly – 983 compared to 723 previously. 55 of the companies are SMEs (previously: 60), mostly from the finance, services and trade sectors.

The good practices included in the report are also presented in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals announced by the UN in 2015. The greatest number of practices work towards Goal 4 “Good quality education” and Goal 3 “Good health and quality of life” in correspondence to the trend from previous reports. The number of practices assigned to Goal 5 “Gender equality” and Goal 10 “Reduction of inequality” has increased by more than 100 percent. A growth – by nearly 60% – has been also observed for Goal 12 “Sustainable consumption and production”, which reflects the huge importance of environmental issues highlighted by the latest report.

Download a PDF version of the report >>

<http://odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl/publikacje/raport-2019/>

Trends in #Raport2019

The 7 areas identified by ISO 26000 remain the key to the classification of practices in the report. They include: organisational governance, human rights, labour practices, the environment, fair operating practices, consumer issues, and local community involvement and development. Once grouped into areas, good practices are then subdivided into categories, i.e. the central topics within the respective areas. The number of practices in a category reflects the changes in companies' activity and their commitment, but also reveals the challenges they face.

The largest increase in the number of good practices in the report is recorded for the **environment**, despite the newly introduced cap of 10 new CSR activities that can be submitted. The latest Report contains 321 'environmental' practices, which means an increase by over 35 percent compared to last year's edition. The increase in the number of companies that have reported environmental practices is also high – nearly 30 percent. For the most part, the practices involve environmental education of, *inter alia*, employees, children, communities, and city residents. By contrast, market education initiatives are still few and far between. A range of practices also involve large-scale environmental programmes that work, for example, towards more efficient resource management. Efforts related to a circular economy and conservation of biodiversity are becoming increasingly important, which is demonstrated by an overview of activities in the 'environment' area. The simplest examples of green activities are described in the 'eco-office' category and encompass such practices as, for example, going plastic free.

Every third practice submitted represents the area "**local community involvement and development**" (564 is the sum of new and long-term practices in this area). This confirms the continuous trend of high commitment to the pursuit of community-oriented practices by companies. There are as many as 17 categories in this area, with 'charity and philanthropic activities', and 'education of children and youth' represented most numerous. New practices regarding the development of entrepreneurship and sustainable cities are the least represented – two practices per category. Compared to the previous report, the number of new practices in the category 'social innovation' has increased considerably.

Owing to the change in the rules for reporting good practices (the abovementioned cap of 10 for new practices), this year's report has seen a considerable decline in the area '**employee-oriented practices**'. The number has dropped from 237 to 185 new practices, which makes it more comparable to that from two years back (175). The situation was opposite for long-term practices, with 288 reported this year and 180 last year (with no reporting limit in place). Compared to last year, the greatest changes have been recorded for the 'employee health' and 'employee volunteering' categories, with the number of

practices having decreased by a dozen or so. One noteworthy category is that comprising training and development, where a clear rise in the number of practices is observable.

95 practices reported by 41 companies have been assigned to the **'consumer issues'** area. The figures are comparable to last year's. The area remains important, but is developing less dynamically than the other CSR areas. The practices in this area are divided into six categories, with 'consumer education' ranking first (14 practices), followed by: 'availability of products and services' (seven), 'consumer aids' (three), 'consumer participation' (two), 'responsible consumption' (one), and 'consumer health and safety' (one).

The **'organisational governance'** area is divided into the following categories: 'compliance', 'stakeholder dialogue', 'ethics', 'reporting' and 'management'. Ethics activities predominate, representing nearly 40 percent of all the 96 practices assigned to this area. In the 'management' category, the report highlights a trend to introduce additional environmental rules and policies in support of a circular economy or counteracting climate change.

As in the previous report, human rights and fair operating practices remain the least numerous areas, with 74 and 73 practices respectively. Both these categories have seen an increase in the number of good practices compared to the previous report. The area **'human rights'** consists largely of diversity management activities aimed at building an inclusive organisational culture. Given its rising tendency, 'women in business' is a separate category, and is the second most numerous one after 'diversity'. Solutions that address the pay gap, employment, or reconciliation of private and professional life qualify here.

In the 18th edition, the least practices have been assigned to the area **'fair operating practices'**, which concerns ethical conduct in contacts of the company with other organisations. It encompasses the principles of shaping these relationships, as well as educational activities benefiting suppliers, industry organisations or other stakeholders. For the most part, companies whose practices were included in this area focus on market education activities and modelling relationships with suppliers.

Report Release

The "Responsible Business in Poland 2019. Good Practices" report was announced online on 16 April this year. Dr. Adam Bodnar, who is the Polish Ombudsman, was a special guest. The premiere was streamed live on: facebook.com/ForumOdpowiedzialnegoBiznesu. On the same day, the Responsible Business Forum inaugurated the jubilee '20 years of partnership for sustainable development in Poland' in celebration of two decades of the commitment of the



Responsible Business Forum

ul. Szpitalna 5/20, 00-031 Warszawa

Phone: +48 22 627 18 71

biuro@fob.org.pl, www.odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl



association and RBF's partner organisations is promoting responsible business standards and sustainable development.

The winners of the 'Quill of Responsibility' competition for journalists and CSR experts were named during the event, too. **The jurors appreciated the most texts published in: *Dziennik Gazeta Prawna, Forbes, My Company Polska, Nienieodpowiedzialni, Personel Plus, Polityka, and Rzeczpospolita.***

On the same day, the Responsible Business Forum officially announced the accession of new strategic partners: **Ceetrus Polska** and **T-Mobile Polska** (with the latter rejoining the RBF initiative as a partner), and thanked the following companies for their many years of cooperation under the Partnership Programme: **Orange Polska (15 years of cooperation), CEMEX Polska (10 years), Castorama and PGE Polska Grupa Energetyczna (5 years).**

The "Responsible Business in Poland. Good Practices" report is the most important cyclical publication of the Responsible Business Forum, released since 2002. The Report presents an overview of activities carried out by companies which reported on their CSR practices and a summary of key issues of responsible business in Poland for the year under review. The introductory section features expert articles and commentaries. Moreover, each publication contains an overview of selected press articles and a calendar of CSR events. Previous editions are available online at: <http://odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl/publikacje/?type=114>. All practices from the successive Reports can be found using the good practices search tool, available at: <http://odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl/dobre-praktyki/>.

Contact for the media:

Agnieszka Siarkiewicz, mobile: +48 669 510 483, e-mail: agnieszka.siarkiewicz@fob.org.pl

The **Responsible Business Forum** is the largest NGO in Poland addressing the concept of corporate social responsibility in a comprehensive manner, with the longest tradition in Poland, operating since 2000. The Forum is an expert organisation that initiates and partners key Polish CSR undertakings. We inspire business that changes the world and provide a meeting space for people who change business. We promote sustainable development. For more information, visit www.odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl.